



112 MacTanly Place
Staunton, VA 24401

Phone: (540) 885-5174
Fax: (540) 885-2687

BRITE Transit Advisory Committee Meeting Summary
March 13, 2024, 2:30 p.m.

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
112 MacTanly Place
Staunton, VA 24401

[Click Here for Audio Recording of Meeting](#)

	Name	Organization
✓	Amanda Kaufman	City of Staunton
✓	Jennifer Whetzel	County of Augusta
✓	Leslie Tate	City of Waynesboro
✓	Krystal Moyers*	Augusta Health
	Mike Kelley	Wilson Workforce & Rehabilitation Center
	Michele Waitier	Staunton Downtown Development
✓	Terry Rodgers, Chair	Shenandoah Valley Social Services
✓	Anastasia Triplett*	Blue Ridge Community College
✓	Becky Messer	Transit Service Rider
✓	Paul Terry	Transit Service Rider
✓	Steve Wilson*	Virginia Regional Transit
✓	Kyle Trissel*	Department of Rail and Public Transportation

	Name	Organization
✓	Ann Cundy	CSPDC
	Bonnie Riedesel	CSPDC
✓	Devon Thompson	CSPDC
✓	Paula Melester	CSPDC
✓	Alisande Tombarge, City of Waynesboro	
✓	Tammy DuBose, Valley Community Services Board	
✓	Rodney Rhodes, City of Staunton	

Call to Order

The March 13, 2024, meeting of the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee (BTAC) was called to order at 2:31 PM by Ms. Terry Rodgers, Chairperson. Pursuant to §2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia, BTAC members may participate in meetings through electronic communication means. Those who attended virtually were indicated by an asterisk; all others attended in person.

Public Comment

Chairperson Rodgers opened the floor for public comment. There were no public comments.



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Approve Minutes

Chairperson Rodgers presented the minutes from the January 10, 2024, BTAC meeting for consideration.

Ms. Leslie Tate moved, seconded by Ms. Becky Messer, to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2024, meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Business

Valley Community Services Board – Future Stop & Funding Partner: Ms. Devon Thompson reminded the committee that Valley Community Services Board (VCSB) requested a stop at their facility on Sangers Lane in Staunton in fall 2023. Ms. Thompson noted that VCSB was a previous funding partner, and their facility was served by transit when the BRITE Bus system was still operating as Coordinated Area Transit System (CATS). VCSB requested that their role as a funding partner along with the bus stop be reinstated. Due to the time constraints of the 250 Connector Route, which would serve VCSB, an additional stop at the Sangers Lane facility on every trip would have an impact on the performance of the route. Ms. Thompson indicated that Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) and Virginia Regional Transit (VRT) staff prepared and proposed an alternative that would provide service to VCSB at three relevant times of the day without significantly impacting the overall timing of the route. Ms. Thompson presented the proposed stop times and location that would work well operationally for VRT and align with peak programming at VCSB (see attached presentation for additional detail). The 250 Connector (eastbound and westbound) would serve VCSB Monday through Friday at 7:50 AM/8:00 AM, 12:00 PM, and 4:50 PM/5:00 PM in a gravel lot south of the building (privately owned and maintained by VCSB).

Ms. Thompson outlined the next steps if the committee voted to approve the stop and funding partner status of VCSB. The bus stop sign would be installed, and communications would be pushed out via BRITE Bus and VCSB. Additionally, staff would look into implementing the Transit Development Plan (TDP) recommendation for the Waynesboro Circulator which would assist the 250 Connector by picking up a stop currently served by the 250 Connector. This would allow for hourly service to VCSB.

Ms. Thompson also indicated that the way the new stop was being phased in would be reflected in the funding partner addition. VCSB would pay a pro-rated amount as a preliminary funding partner, and then be added in as a full funding partner. Once voted on as a stop and funding partner, the BTAC bylaws would need to be amended to reflect the addition of a funding partner.

Questions that regarded stop implementation time and changes to future bus stop signs were asked, and Ms. Thompson indicated that implementation time would be quick, around two weeks, and that once service transitioned from three times a day to hourly a new bus stop sign would be installed to reflect the change. Additionally, Ms. Tammy DuBose indicated that a small shelter was already on the premises and would be moved over to the bus stop area to serve as a covered place for riders to wait for the bus.

Ms. Messer moved, seconded by Ms. Amanda Kauffman, to approve the stop as presented, and the subsequent addition of VCSB as a funding partner. Motion carried unanimously.



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Staunton Lewis Street Hub Rehabilitation Update: Ms. Paula Melester provided an update on the Lewis Street Transit Hub rehabilitation project. Ms. Melester reminded the committee that the CSPDC purchased the property from the American Shakespeare Center in 2020, and applied for and received a competitive federal discretionary grant in 2021 for repavement and passenger amenities improvements. The federal funds were matched with state and local dollars, and the CSPDC received support from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) through both matching funds and project support. Ms. Melester indicated that the CSPDC worked with engineers from Kimley-Horn and Associates to develop design plans for the renovation and wrapped up the design phase at the end of 2023. The CSPDC solicited bids from construction firms in January 2024, and received a competitive bid from a contractor. The CSPDC was in the process of awarding a contract. Ms. Melester summarized project next steps, which included hosting a pre-construction meeting, issuing a Notice to Proceed, and beginning construction work in mid-April. Construction would last approximately four months. Additionally, Ms. Melester provided an overview of the improvements that would be made to the site (see attached presentation for more detail):

- ADA compliant sidewalks that would connect the passenger boarding area to the existing Lewis Street sidewalks;
- Designated crosswalks with detectable warning plates at the curbs and a herringbone stamped concrete feature;
- A dedicated bus lane fully separated from the parking area with a concrete median and landscaping;
- Electrical conduit for future Electric Vehicle charging;
- New lighting along the back of the lot for passenger safety;
- Retaining wall with seat cap to provide additional seating capacity; and
- Designated accessible parking spaces with connectivity to the passenger boarding area and the existing Lewis Street sidewalk.

Questions were asked regarding capacity for the rehabilitated hub, and Ms. Melester indicated that four buses would be able to utilize the bus lane in the back of the lot and seating would be maximized with a seating wall in addition to the two existing bus shelters that would be reinstalled. Additionally, Ms. Ann Cundy noted that the new parking area would accommodate between 15 -20 parking spaces, which was slightly less than the current footprint (but more than enough based on known utilization).

Ms. Melester then shared logistics for the temporary hub location during construction on North Augusta Street. Ms. Melester acknowledged the City of Staunton staff for their support to develop the alternate location and accommodation for bus operations during construction. The temporary space would occupy 19 angled parking spaces on North Augusta Street between Academy Street and Frederick Street (see the attached diagram for more detailed information). A robust communications plan was developed with the City of Staunton to notify nearby residents and businesses of the changes, both at the construction site on Lewis Street and the temporary hub on North Augusta Street.



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Ms. Tate inquired about who the contractor was, and Ms. Melester replied that Virginia Infrastructure, a small business based out of Lexington that had completed VDOT projects, would be awarded the contract.

ITS – Mobile Data Collection System Update: Ms. Thompson reported that implementation for the Mobile Data Collection System (MDCS) – the backend software for data collection and real-time GPS for buses – continued and was nearing completion. Passio Technologies, the company that provided the software, conducted on-site training January 30 and 31, and VRT had trained all of their drivers and staff on the mobile data terminals and corresponding software. Ms. Thompson announced that the new technology was launched on March 1, but that drivers would continue to track data manually in addition to digitally until the two sources of data corresponded in accuracy.

Ms. Thompson shared a view of the reporting dashboard with committee members, and noted the different features and reports that could be generated through the Passio platform. Some noted features included: fleet logistics (buses in service); dispatcher messaging; detailed reporting; and a real-time GPS map.

Ms. Messer sought clarification on “Passenger Type”, and Ms. Thompson explained that different types of passengers, such as a student rider, a hospital rider, or fare type (cash versus farecard payment), were tracked throughout the system to get a better understanding of the ridership. Additionally, Ms. Messer asked if the new software tracked the time for mobility device loading times, and Ms. Thompson indicated that this was not information that was tracked since paratransit operations utilized a different type of software to manage and schedule requests.

Ms. Melester added that the data collected through the new platform would allow for more consistent and accurate information for route performance and stop utilizations than what was only currently available through random sampling. This feature would be helpful for advising the BTAC on decisions that regarded adding service or stops.

Afton Express Update: Ms. Melester provided a brief update on the Afton Express. The Annual Report was published the prior week, and it included a comprehensive overview of the year’s activities. Ms. Melester highlighted the annual ridership for 2023 of 16,482 passengers which was a nearly 60 percent increase over 2022 and noted that the annual report contained responses from passenger surveys that provided deeper insight into how the public utilized the Afton Express.

Contractor Update: Mr. Steve Wilson reported on the following:

- **Operations:** Mr. Wilson stated that staffing was improving – a number of new drivers had been hired recently. VRT would celebrate Transit Operator Appreciation Day later in March with lunch for their drivers, and donuts from the CSPDC. Mr. Wilson shared that ridership was up approximately 13 percent from the prior year. He also echoed Ms. Thompson’s comments about the messaging features provided by the mobile data terminals, and expressed how useful they were in communicating with drivers.
- **Bus Stop – Citgo (Staunton):** Mr. Wilson presented a proposed bus stop at the Citgo gas station in Staunton (West Beverley Street). This was a known and already well-utilized stop for existing riders. Staff requested that the BTAC vote to formally approve this location as a permanent stop. Mr. Wilson stated that the stop



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would be served by the Staunton West Loop and was the last stop before the bus turned around at Food Lion (West Beverley Street). The stop would be served by both out- and in-bound buses (eastbound and westbound). Mr. Wilson confirmed there were no concerns about access, safety, or timing to add the new stop from an operational standpoint.

Mr. Rodney Rhodes commented that the City of Staunton would be re-paving that particular segment of West Beverley Street and would be adding a bike lane to the shoulder. Mr. Rhodes inquired if there would be any conflict between buses and cyclists once that is complete, and Mr. Wilson replied that the buses would be mindful of cyclists while stopping along that stretch of roadway and would defer to cyclists who have the right of way.

Mr. Paul Terry moved, seconded by Ms. Jennifer Whetzel, to approve the stop as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Other Business: Chairperson Rodgers asked if there was any other business to come before the committee.

- **Remote Area Medical Clinic:** Ms. Thompson announced that BRITE would provide one-day only service to the Remote Area Medical Clinic at the Augusta Expo Center via the Stuarts Draft Link. Ms. Thompson extended her thanks to Ms. Krystal Moyers for bringing this partnership to fruition. This service would help make the clinic more accessible. Ms. Thompson noted that the Stuarts Draft Link did not typically operate on Saturdays, but would on April 13 for the clinic. The route would mirror the typical weekly route, and would operate from 6:45 AM to 6:45 PM, with one exception that it would serve the Augusta Expo Center instead of the Amazon facility.
- **RideShare Strategic Plan:** Ms. Melester announced that the RideShare Commuter Assistance Program was developing a strategic plan to guide operations for the next five years, and had a survey available to collect data on commuter trends and behaviors. Ms. Melester shared that the survey was live and was available through April 15. She encouraged the BTAC members to share the survey link with their respective agencies and organizations.

Adjournment

Chairperson Rodgers indicated that the next BTAC meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, May 8, 2024, at 2:30 PM at the CSPDC office.

There being no further business to come before the BTAC, the meeting concluded at 3:21 PM.

**Valley Community
Services Board –
Potential Funding
Partner and New Stop**





Proposed Alternative

- Buses would utilize gravel lot to the south of the VCSB offices
- Begin with three designated timed stops throughout the day, Monday through Friday – 8AM, 12PM, and 5PM
- Gravel pathway to access the parking lot/building
- Reduces safety impacts of traveling through parking lot

Timing Impact

- Time impact of 5-10 minutes to travel to VCSB and back to Route 250



BRITE STOP

Valley Community Services Board



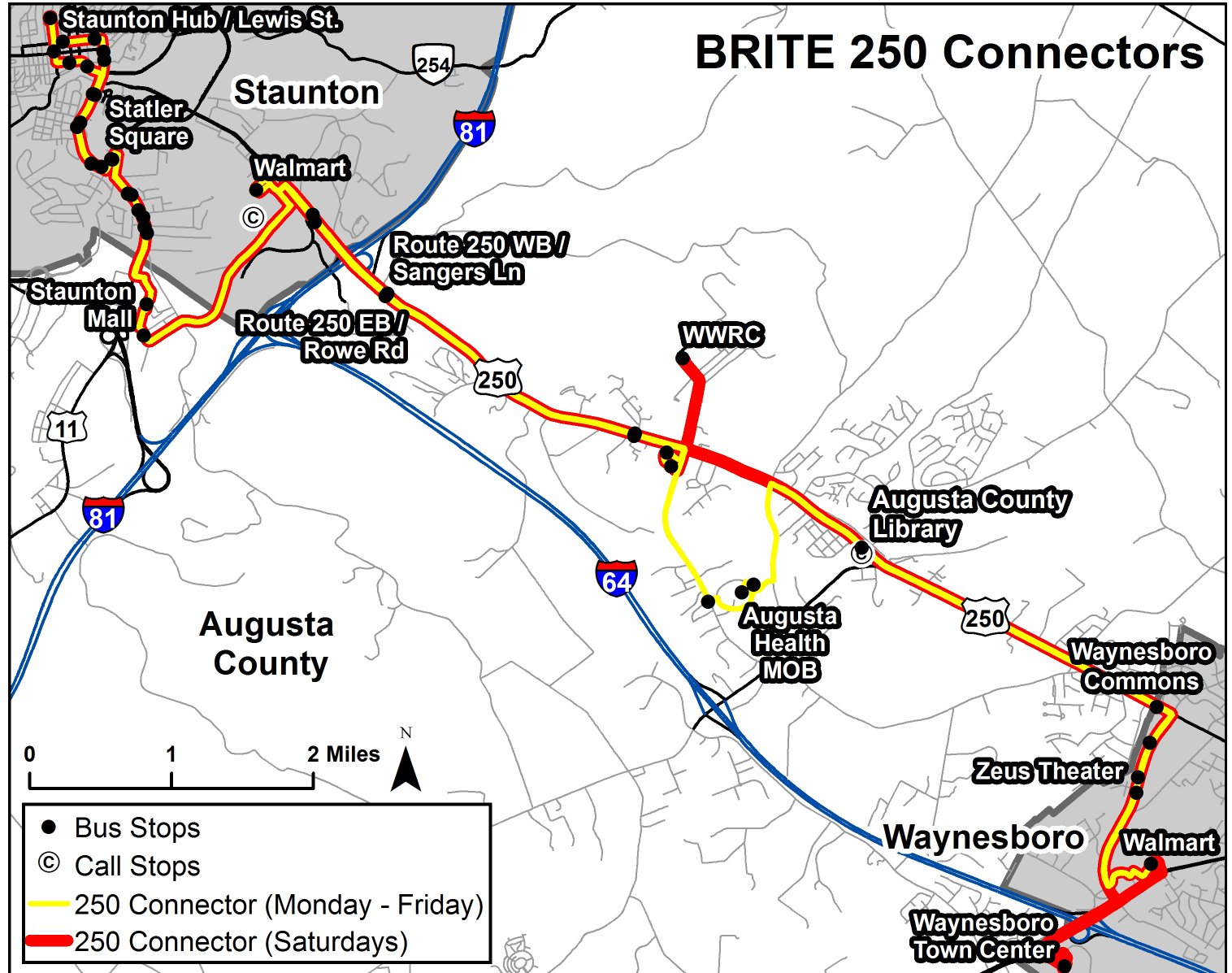
540-943-9302 | www.britebus.org

Routes Served

250 Connector

WB STOPS: 8 AM / 12 PM / 5 PM

EB STOPS: 7:50 AM / 12 PM / 4:50 PM



Next Steps & Future Operations

Begin serving VCSB at designated stop times, monitor usage, and bring on VCSB as a funding partner.

TDP Projects / Planned Projects:

- Waynesboro Circulator route change (W Main St travel instead of Rosser Ave)
- Bus stop safety improvements (SMART SCALE project at Sangers Ln)
- Staunton Crossing Park & Ride Lot



LEWIS STREET HUB UPDATE

March 13, 2024



LEWIS STREET HUB REHABILITATION



Existing Lot Conditions (2023)

LEWIS STREET HUB REHABILITATION



Colored Concrete
New Sidewalks & Curbs
(ADA Accessible)

Herringbone Stamped
Crosswalks

Lighting & Future EV
Charging Capacity

New/Upgraded
Amenities

Landscaping

Designated Bus Lane

Seating Wall

TEMPORARY TRANSIT HUB



QUESTIONS



LEWIS STREET TRANSFER HUB - VIEW 1 (LOOKING NORTH)

AUGUST 2023



Kimley»Horn

PAGE 1

Proposed BRITE Bus Stop Addition



Staunton West Loop

Citgo Station
(West Beverley St)



Food Lion

Food Lion

Savex CITGO
\$3.30

W Beverley St

W Beverley St

Beverley Street
Barber Shop

Little O

Central
Shenandoah EMS
Council, Inc.

Noon St

BTAC Discussion – Citgo; West Loop

- Request
 - *A signed bus stop at Citgo (West Beverley St)*
- Feasibility and Route Impact
 - *This is currently an often-requested stop that will not impact the route or timetable*
- Safety Concerns
 - *There are no safety concerns with this stop*